

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 02100 221313Z  
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 /023 W  
-----221455Z 038646 /50-40

R 221127Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2329  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION BERLIN UNN  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMCONSUL MUNICH  
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 2100

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SOPN, OGEN, XH  
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE MOVE OF RFE/RL TO U.S.

REF: STATE 57405

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT SHIFT OF RFE TO U.S. SITE WOULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE BOTH "RAPPORT" WITH ITS AUDIENCE, AND QUALITY OF ITS BROADCAST AND RESEARCH PRODUCT. A MOVE TO U.S. MIGHT ALSO MAKE RFE EVEN MORE OF A CONTENTIOUS BILATERAL ISSUE BY HIGHLIGHTING U.S. RESPONSIBILITY FOR RFE BROADCASTING, TO EVEN GREATER EXTENT THAN PRESENT. WE SEE NO POLITICAL MERIT TO ANY SUCH MOVE. END SUMMARY.

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2. GOR OBJECTIONS TO RFE ARE BASED PRIMARILY ON BROADCAST CONTENT AND IN PARTICULAR ITS INTERNAL COMMENTARY RATHER THAN ON SITE LOCATION AS SUCH. GOR REPRESENTATIVES (MOST RECENTLY EARLY THIS YEAR BURTICA TO AMBASSADOR) HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR UNHAPPINESS OVER U.S. SPONSORSHIP OF RFE, BUT HAVE NOT COMPLAINED TO

FRG OF LATE, PROBABLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE LEARNED TO LIVE WITH AMBIGUOUS SITUATION. A MOVE BY RFE TO THE STATES COULD MAKE THE RADIO THEREFORE MORE OF A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS IF GOR DECIDED TO HOLD U.S. MORE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL RFE BROADCASTS. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE IS MERIT IN THE CONTINUATION OF A SITUATION IN WHICH THE FRG ACTS AS BOTH A GEOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BUFFER FOR THE U.S.

3. IN CASE OF ROMANIAN SERVICE WE BELIEVE A RELOCATION TO U.S. WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT CONTENT AND QUALITY OF ITS BROADCASTING BY LIMITING EXISTING INFORMATION SOURCES. IN ADDITION PRESENT "RAPPORT" ESTABLISHED BY PROXIMITY OF MUNICH WOULD BE LOST. AS RESULT SUCH A MOVE WOULD PROBABLY BE JUDGED CRITICALLY BY ROMANIAN LISTENERSHIP AND SEEN AS CONCESSION TO CURRENTLY WANING, BUT STILL CONTINUING ANTI-RFE CAMPAIGN HERE.

4. PROXIMITY OF MUNICH ADDS TO TIMELINESS AND FLAVOR OF ROMANIAN BROADCASTING SERVICE IN NUMBER OF WAYS. PERHAPS MOST RECENT AND BEST EXAMPLE IF RFE'S PERFORMANCE DURING RECENT ROMANIAN EARTHQUAKE. NOT ONLY DID RFE BEGIN ITS INFORMATIONAL BROADCASTING ON CRISIS PRIOR TO RADIO BUCHAREST, BUT PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY, BY OPENING ITS SWITCHBOARD TO CALLS FROM ROMANIANS ABROAD, IT SERVED AS CHANNEL OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FAMILIES, RELATIVES AND FRIENDS. EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT IS FACT THAT GOR CONFIDENTIAL

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ITSELF TACITLY ACKNOWLEDGED VALUE OF THIS RFE ROLE BY PERMITTING HUNDREDS OF ITS CITIZENS TO CALL MUNICH IN RESPONSE TO MESSAGES BROADCAST. IF RFE HAD BEEN LOCATED IN U.S., TELEPHONE CHANGES ALONE WOULD HAVE PROBABLY PREVENTED SUCH A ROLE.

5. IN ADDITION RFE HAS CLEARLY SERVED AS FOCAL POINT AND INFORMATION CENTER LINKED TO RECENT EMERGENCE OF ROMANIAN DISSIDENT MOVEMENT. AGAIN THE PROXIMITY OF MUNICH HAS PERMITTED RELATIVELY UNHINDERED EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION VIA LETTERS, TELEPHONE CALLS AND EVEN VISITS. THIS WOULD ALSO BE GREATLY CURTAILED BY A U.S. RELOCATION.

6. THE ALMOST INEVITABLE DIMINUTION OF MORE GENERAL INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM VISITS AND LETTERS CAUSED BY MOVE TO U.S. IS ALSO LIKELY TO AFFECT CONTENT AND FLAVOR OF BOTH BROADCASTING AND RESEARCH. WHILE THERE ARE OTHER ADVANTAGES WHICH ATTACH TO PRESENT MUNICH LOCATION, E.G., EASIER MONITORING OF BUCHAREST BROAD-

CASTS, PRESENCE OF ACTIVE ROMANIAN INTELLECTUAL EXILE COMMUNITY IN PARIS AND A EUROPEAN PRESS AND PUBLIC MORE INTERESTED IN EASTERN EUROPE THAN ARE ITS U.S. COUNTER-PARTS, WE CONSIDER AFOREMENTIONED MOST IMPORTANT.

7. COMMENT: WE CONTINUE TO FIND OURSELVES OCCASIONALLY IN DISAGREEMENT WITH SLANT AND TONE OF SOME OF RFE'S BROADCASTING INTO ROMANIA. WE SUSPECT THAT A MOVE TO U.S. WOULD MAKE THESE LAPSES SOMEWHAT EASIER TO CONTROL AND PERHAPS LESS LIKELY TO OCCUR. NEVERTHELESS, IT SEEMS TO US THAT PRICE OF SUCH A MOVE IN TERMS OF LOSS OF AN ALREADY WELL ESTABLISHED RAPPORT WITH ITS LISTENING AUDIENCE HERE IS TOO GREAT A ONE TO PAY. MUCH OF RFE'S APPEAL HERE DERIVES FROM FACT THAT IT IS RECOGNIZED AS A "EUROPEAN" STATE, WITH ALL THE AMBIENCE AND ATMOSPHERE WHICH CHARACTERIZE THAT TERM. THIS ALSO WOULD INEVITABLY BE LOST. WE THEREFORE PREFER CURRENT SYSTEM OF CLOSE CONFIDENTIAL

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MONITORING OF RFE BROADCASTS AND COORDINATION WITH BIB AND RFE RATHER THAN ANY RADICAL CHANGE IN PRESENT SET-UP. BARNES

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** SOPN, OGEN, XH, US, RFE, RL  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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